

ROUTING

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Friday December 24, 1976

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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Friday December 24, 1976.

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The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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LEBANON: Situation Report

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[] Prime Minister Salim al-Huss yesterday asked the Lebanese parliament for broad emergency powers to rule by decree for six months. The parliament, meeting for the first time since the cease-fire was announced in October, will probably approve his request.

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[] The Prime Minister is likely to use his new authority to suspend the right of assembly and impose press censorship. According to one report, the local press association has already moved to impose self-censorship in an effort to persuade the Syrians to lift their recent shutdowns of Lebanese papers critical of the Syrian presence in Lebanon.

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[] In his address to parliament, al-Huss called for rebuilding the army and security forces and announced that he will establish a council for economic reconstruction and development. He said the government would continue to encourage private enterprise and respect private ownership.

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[] //Some tentative progress has been made toward an agreement on the collection of heavy weapons from the combatants, but major obstacles continue to block an accord on this issue.//

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[] The Lebanese Christian leadership reportedly has given preliminary approval to a surrender of arms, but is reserving a final decision pending elaboration of plans for the surrender of weapons by the Palestinians.

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[] //Because the Palestinians in the past have used their forces in the south as a source of supply for units fighting in the north, the Christians are almost certain to

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reject any arms surrender agreement that would allow the Palestinians to retain heavy weapons anywhere in Lebanon. In any event, there is no indication that the Palestinian "rejectionists" will go along with the PLO and agree to surrender their heavy weapons in the north. Rejectionist publications have continued to assert that no guerrillas should hand over their arms.// [REDACTED]

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SPAIN: Dilemma Over Carrillo

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[REDACTED] The arrest of Spanish Communist leader Santiago Carrillo places the Suarez government in a dilemma. It must find a course of action that does not make a martyr of Carrillo or undermine government efforts to draw the Spanish opposition into the democratic process. At the same time, it must not anger the strongly anti-communist Spanish military.

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[REDACTED] Carrillo, who went into exile during the Civil War, has apparently spent much of his time in recent months living clandestinely in Madrid. The government may have been aware of his presence, but--in keeping with its general willingness to turn a blind eye to many kinds of communist activity--it did not search actively for him.

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[REDACTED] On December 10, however, Carrillo openly defied the government by holding a press conference in Madrid. It is unclear whether he was deliberately courting arrest, but there are reasons why the Communists could welcome the government's action.

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[REDACTED] The arrest will again focus public attention--which lately has been turning to the parliamentary election planned for next spring--on the issue of legalizing the Communist Party. In recent weeks, the party has seemed to be slipping into political isolation; Carrillo may have been spurred to action by clear indications that the Socialists are willing to participate in the election whether or not the Communists are legalized. He may expect that the opposition will feel obliged to rally behind the Communists in calling for his release.

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[REDACTED] Rumors persist, moreover, that Carrillo's leadership has been under challenge within the party, and he may hope his arrest will strengthen his position.

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[] The potential benefits to the party of Carrillo's press conference have been marred by the fact that his appearance was linked, at least in the eyes of conservatives, to the kidnapping by leftist terrorists of Antonio Maria de Oriol the following day--a linkage that could reduce the party's chances of early legalization. Carrillo's defiant appearance in Madrid was also a provocation to the military, whose support is crucial to the government and whose leaders are reportedly adamant in their opposition to legalization of the party before the election.

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[] The government is now in an awkward position. By arresting Carrillo it to some degree refuted rightist charges that it could not act decisively in the face of Carrillo's challenge. Prolonging his detention, however, would provoke demonstrations and labor disturbances and fuel international allegations that Spain still falls far short of democracy.

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[] It is unclear, moreover, what charges the government could bring against the Communist leader. He has been linked to Civil War crimes--most notably the execution of some 10,000 Nationalist prisoners in 1936--but the 30-year statute of limitations has run out. A royal amnesty decree issued last summer apparently excuses any political "crimes" committed since the Civil War.

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[] Currently, most Communists arrested in Spain are released following a short detention; unless the government has embarked on a full-scale crackdown, the seven members of the Central Committee arrested at the same time as Carrillo are likely to be set free soon. Carrillo cannot be released so easily since his presence in Spain is technically illegal.

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[] If Prime Minister Suarez can overcome military reluctance to releasing Carrillo, the government may simply expel him from the country, probably to France where he has lived during most of his exile. The government might defuse the issue by reiterating the reason for not granting him a passport when he applied last summer: his position in the Communist Party and his association with Civil War incidents make him a figure who would arouse passions best forgotten at this stage of the reform program.

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[] If the government makes it clear that Carrillo will be deported like a common criminal every time he shows up in Spain, the issue could become embarrassing for the Communist Party.

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[] In any case, the government will probably act as quickly as possible. The arrest has already sparked a campaign for Carrillo's release, with demonstrations in Madrid and strikes in several parts of northern Spain including Catalonia, the Basque provinces, and the volatile coal-mining districts of Asturias. Various Spanish leftist parties have formally condemned the arrest, and an international protest is being led by Romania, Italy, and various leftist European parties.

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[] Strikes and demonstrations are likely to continue in Spain as long as Carrillo is detained. The possibility of an overreaction by crowds or police that would initiate a cycle of violence is ever-present. The Christmas vacation period will help to dampen excesses, however, and the unresolved Oriol kidnapping may encourage responsibility among leftists who fear being identified with the terrorists. []

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NIGERIA: Relations with US, South Africa

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[] Nigerian head of state Obasanjo recently outlined to a visiting US senator his government's views on the US role in southern Africa and his hope for good relations with the incoming US administration.

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[] In discussing efforts toward black majority rule in southern Africa--a prime aim of the current Nigerian military regime--Obasanjo emphasized that US influence is a key factor. He expressed the hope that the US would increase diplomatic and economic pressure on the governments of Rhodesia and South Africa. At the same time, his remarks echoed Nigerian suspicion about US intentions in the area.

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[] By stressing the US role, Obasanjo may well have been preparing to blame the US if there is no progress toward black majority rule in southern Africa.

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- 25X1 [] Obasanjo pointed to the Angola issue as the main factor in US-Nigerian policy differences over the past year. He said South Africa's intervention there left Nigeria with no choice but to support the black Angolan group opposing South Africa, regardless of its ideology. He questioned whether the US had stopped supporting rival Angolan groups. Obasanjo said the next move in Angola is up to the US, which should formally recognize the Popular Movement government.
- 25X1 [] Obasanjo reaffirmed Nigerian skepticism about US initiatives on Rhodesia. He acknowledged that some progress has been made in the recent Geneva talks, however, and said he expects further progress under the incoming US administration.
- 25X1 [] //The Nigerian head of state said he hopes the US will work with the British to establish an interim Rhodesian government in which the UK would have the main role fortified, if necessary, by a Commonwealth defense force.//
- 25X1 [] Namibian independence, Obasanjo complained, would have been easier to handle had it not been "sacrificed" for movement on the Rhodesia problem. He said the US should press South Africa to convene a conference on Namibian independence with the UN mediating between the two sides. He warned that armed struggle is the only alternative to progress toward such a conference.
- 25X1 [] Obasanjo said Nigeria sought the end of apartheid and the adoption of the one-man, one-vote principle for all South Africans. With US backing, he said, Western economic pressure could produce these changes. The "Eastern powers" will try to capitalize on South African obstinacy by fomenting disorder there, Obasanjo warned. It would therefore benefit Western strategic and economic interests, he said, to strive for a basic revision of South African society.
- 25X1 [] Despite his allusion to the "Eastern powers," Obasanjo urged the US not to treat African affairs--such as Angola--within the context of East-West competition.
- 25X1 [] Obasanjo's initiative toward the new administration illustrates the Nigerian regime's determination to play a leading role in southern Africa issues. Its increasing diplomatic,

financial, and material support of black nationalists is motivated by its empathy with black Africans living under white-minority governments and by a presumption that Nigeria will play a special role in Africa by virtue of its large population and oil income. [REDACTED]

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EAST - WEST GERMANY: Political Tensions

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[REDACTED] The East Germans have expelled a West German correspondent for the second time this year, further accentuating the current ebb in bilateral relations.

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[REDACTED] The correspondent, Loethar Lowe, was a television commentator stationed in East Berlin. His recent coverage of the East German regime's cultural crackdown undoubtedly was particularly galling to leadership sensitivities.

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[REDACTED] Lowe's expulsion followed a broadcast in which he attacked an authoritative article in the East German party daily and was caustically critical of East German border guards. The article in the party organ had personally criticized West German Chancellor Schmidt and assailed remarks by Schmidt before the West German parliament last week. It said Schmidt had insinuated that the East German leadership had intentions toward West Germany that were incompatible with peace and security in Europe.

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[REDACTED] The decision to oust Lowe is the latest indication that the Honecker regime is becoming increasingly irritated by the West German media's focus on East Germany's internal problems. Party leaders employed strong language against the West German government at an East German parliamentary session last week. Willi Stoph, chairman of the Council of Ministers, argued that East German citizens were being made "free game" for anti-communist excesses of revanchist elements in West Germany.

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[redacted] The East Germans also have renewed charges that West German border police in Bavaria have subjected East German citizens to humiliating procedures at crossing points. East German border authorities apparently have deliberately created minor delays this week along one of the main Berlin transit routes, reportedly telling West German travelers that "it's all Lowe's fault." [redacted]

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